NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2007AE0076-001464
Nov. 15, 2007

Ministry of Advanced Education

PROVINCE COMPETES FOR MORE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

VICTORIA – More than 85 countries around the world are celebrating International Education Week this year, showing the increasing awareness of the importance of this field, as well as the escalating competition for students, Advanced Education Minister Murray Coell said today.

"B.C. enjoys many advantages in attracting international students – our top-notch post-secondary education system, our high standard of living, our multicultural society and our province's natural beauty," Coell said. "In return, these students enrich our lives today, and the ties they develop while they attend school here add to the foundation for better international relations in the future. That's why we're focusing on marketing British Columbia as a study destination, while encouraging our post-secondary institutions to develop the international dimension of their campuses."

More than 27,000 international students from 150 countries are registered in B.C.'s public institutions. B.C. draws about 30 per cent of all students who come to Canada, most of them from the Asia Pacific. It is estimated that more than 8,500 B.C. students study abroad each year.

This year the Premier announced $10,000 Pacific Century Graduate Scholarships to attract top scholars and researchers from around the world to B.C.'s four research universities. International students are eligible for up to 20 per cent of these awards.

As well, the Province unveiled two new scholarships to help B.C. public post-secondary students enhance their education by studying overseas. A $10-million endowment fund to establish the One World Scholarship and another $1 million to fund the Pacific Horizon Scholarship will allow students to take part in post-secondary studies, co-op work experiences, internships, and other approved formal or experiential learning activities overseas. More details are online at www.StudentAidBC.ca under "Scholarships."

International education is a key part of the Province's Asia Pacific Gateway strategy. As well as creating scholarships for study abroad, actions to further that strategy include creating a network to keep in touch with B.C. alumni overseas, and developing promotional material in seven different languages focusing on B.C. as a study destination. More information is online at www.learnlivebc.ca.

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1 factsheet(s) attached.

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